

REMARKS

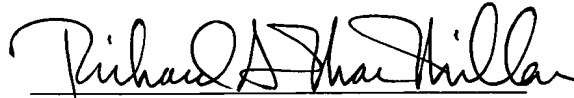
Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the salient limitations of Claim 4, which was indicated by the Examiner to be allowable if re-written in independent form. Additionally, inasmuch as the Examiner placed no patentable significance in the use of the term “vehicle frame member” as used in Claim 1, that claim has been amended to eliminate that limitation. Thus, Claim 1 now defines the invention as a method for high velocity hydroforming a “member” that can be any desired structure.

The Examiner rejected independent Claim 6 as being anticipated by the Smith reference. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 6 specifically recites the step of “feeding said end of said tubular member into said die cavity during the expansion of said tubular member” (emphasis added). The Smith reference does not show or suggest that the end feeding of the workpiece can or should occur simultaneously with the high velocity hydroforming step, as set forth in independent Claim 6. Rather, the Smith reference clearly teaches that the end feeding of the workpiece occurs only during the initial hydrostatic forming step, not during the subsequent high velocity hydroforming step. Although the use of end feeding is known for conventional hydrostatic hydroforming (as described in the Smith reference), there is no suggestion that such end feeding can or should occur during a high velocity hydroforming process, as specifically recited in independent Claim 6.

New independent Claim 8 defines the invention as a method for manufacturing a vehicle frame assembly including the initial step of providing a first vehicle frame member by (1) providing a die having an internal die cavity; (2) providing a tubular member; (3) positioning the tubular member within the die cavity; (4) filling the tubular member with a fluid; and (5) creating a shock wave within said fluid to expand the tubular member to conform to the shape of the die cavity, thereby forming the first vehicle frame member. Next, second, third, and fourth vehicle frame members are provided. Lastly, the first, second, third, and fourth vehicle frame members are secured together to form a vehicle frame assembly. Independent Claim 8 is intended to positively define the method of the invention in the specific context of the

manufacture of a vehicle frame assembly. None of the art of record shows or suggests such a method of manufacturing a vehicle frame assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard S. MacMillan", written over a horizontal line.

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